THE

# MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

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## SIGNS OF THE TIMES

### The Last of the French Modernists.

On the eve of the French collapse under the pressure of the German invasion, Alfred Loisy, at the age of 83, was spared by death from witnessing the dishonour and enslavement of his country. A patriot and a scholar, one whose history proved him ready to sacrifice every material advantage in the cause of truth and honour, he was indeed *felix opportunitate mortis.*

Had Loisy possessed a less acute brain and a less sensitive conscience : had he loved himself more and the truth less : had he not been more Catholic than the Catholic Church : his fate would have been very different. As it was, devoted to the Catholic values as essentials of a true civilization, he died an excommunicated man with his contributions to Biblical research placed on the *Index Expurgatorius.* It is a sad story, a long story, and much of it an old story, for Loisy was excommunicated as far back as March 7, 1908.

Loisy was the greatest of the French Catholic Modernists and a martyr for the truth of Christianity as he saw it. Few among his fellow-Frenchmen and fellow-Catholics could share his vision, for that vision had been secured by the combination of two qualities not very common in isolation but in combination

rare indeed. These were acute critical powers developed during years of research into Jewish and Christian origins, and a profoundly religious spirit prepared for any sacrifice in the cause of truth. As a consequence, he did not find himself in a Christian temple in which there was '*la conciliation d'un esprit hautement religieux avec l'esprit critique*,' for, as Alfred Fawkes wrote of that period in France:

> 'The French mind is not interested in theology: it oscillates between ignorant belief and ignorant unbelief.'

Nevertheless in this conflict Loisy, however extreme and sceptical his criticism may have been, was the true Christian, for the Christian religion is either the religion of truth or it is nothing. Yet the Christian Church has constantly seemed more eager to learn what is trumps than what is truth.

> 'The one grace,' said Martineau, 'which the Church seems never to reach is veracity. But, for a teacher, veracity is the essential grace: the Church must reach it, or she must die.'

This was Loisy's conviction. But for men of that spirit the Christian Church—which demands, not loyalty to the spirit of truth, but in its stead the profession of dogmas as a condition of membership—has ultimately no place. So, as Loisy's studies proceeded, he began to find himself, as he says, *sur la marge*, and then, as a result of 'the very grave errors' detected in his teaching by the Roman authorities, he quickly found himself outside the Church whose devoted servant he was.

Of course he was not infallible: doubtless there were many errors in his conclusions, but suppression and excommunication are not the right methods for a truth-loving community to take in the case of an able student and teacher. Excommunication is a terribly severe test of the heroic devotion to truth of him on whom it is inflicted. As Alfred Fawkes wrote of it in the case of Alfred Loisy:

> 'Nothing, we may believe, but an imperative sense of duty could induce a man to embrace the renunciations, the strife, the interior solitude which such a lot involves. The rewards of life are pleasant, the approval of those about us is an incentive to action and a tribute to achievement with which no one who knows himself or human nature will lightly dispense. But the approval of conscience—in theological language, the praise of God—is better: it must be chosen before the praise of men. And he who chooses this narrow path "may feel a confidence, which no popular caresses or religious sympathy could inspire, that he has by divine help been enabled to plant his foot somewhere

beyond the waves of time. He may depart hence . . . worn out with intellectual toil, regarded with suspicion by many of his contemporaries, yet not without a sure hope that the love of truth, which men of saintly life often seem to slight, is, nevertheless, accepted before God.'' '[1]

## The Decline in Pacifism.

It is a significant fact that Pacifism is declining in this country. In the latest call to the colours of over 300,000 men, only five in every thousand—just one-half per cent.—were conscientious objectors. This decline may be due to the riper age of those last called to the colours. The youthful mind is absolutist and finds no place for compromise. Recognizing that war is not the ideal way of securing peace, it will have nothing to do with war as a peacemaker. Another reason for the decline in pacifism is doubtless due to the growing strength of moral indignation evoked by additional examples of Germany's treachery and ruthlessness, and the realization that to secure a peace based upon mutual understanding and good faith is impossible while Germany possesses the power to make war.

A third reason which accounts for the decline is the growing weight of the case against pacifism presented by noble-hearted lovers of peace who recognize the futility of surrender to Germany as a way of securing the peace of God. In our existing situation that peace can only be secured by exercising in the highest degree all the noblest qualities of heroism, self-discipline, resolution, unselfishness and moral and spiritual faith, individually and collectively, of which our nation is capable. A very striking exposition of this is given in a letter of a young R.A.F. pilot addressed to his mother shortly before his death and published in the *Times* of June 18, 1940:

'Dearest Mother,—Though I feel no premonition at all, events are moving rapidly, and I have instructed that this letter be forwarded to you should I fail to return from one of the raids which we shall shortly be called upon to undertake. You must hope on for a month, but at the end of that time you must accept the fact that I have handed my task over to the extremely capable hands of my comrades of the Royal Air Force, as so many splendid fellows have already done.

First, it will comfort you to know that my rôle in this war has been of the greatest importance. Our patrols far out over the North Sea have helped to keep the trade routes clear for our convoys and supply ships, and on one occasion our information was instrumental in saving

[1] *Studies in Modernism.* By the Rev. Alfred Fawkes. p. 77. (John Murray; 1913.)

the lives of the men in a crippled lighthouse relief ship. Though it will be difficult for you, you will disappoint me if you do not at least try to accept the facts dispassionately, for I shall have done my duty to the utmost of my ability. No man can do more, and no one calling himself a man could do less.

I have always admired your amazing courage in the face of continual setbacks; in the way you have given me as good an education and background as anyone in the country; and always kept up appearances without ever losing faith in the future. My death would not mean that your struggle has been in vain. Far from it. It means that your sacrifice is as great as mine. Those who serve England must expect nothing from her; we debase ourselves if we regard our country as merely a place in which to eat and sleep.

History resounds with illustrious names who have given all, yet their sacrifice has resulted in the British Empire, where there is a measure of peace, justice, and freedom for all, and where a higher standard of civilization has evolved, and is still evolving, than anywhere else. But this is not only concerning our own land. To-day we are faced with the greatest organized challenge to Christianity and civilization that the world has ever seen, and I count myself lucky and honoured to be the right age and fully trained to throw my full weight into the scale. For this I have to thank you. Yet there is more work for you to do. The home front will still have to stand united for years after the war is won. For all that can be said against it, I still maintain that this war is a very good thing; every individual is having the chance to give and dare all for his principles like the martyrs of old. However long the time may be, one thing can never be altered — I shall have lived and died an Englishman. Nothing else matters one jot nor can anything ever change it.

You must not grieve for me, for if you really believe in religion and all that it entails that would be hypocrisy. I have no fear of death; only a queer elation. . . . I would have it no other way. The universe is so vast and so ageless that the life of one man can only be justified by the measure of his sacrifice. We are sent to this world to acquire a personality and a character to take with us that can never be taken from us. Those who just eat and sleep, prosper and procreate, are no better than animals if all their lives they are at peace.

I firmly and absolutely believe that evil things are sent into the world to try us; they are sent deliberately by our Creator to test our metal because He knows what is good for us. The Bible is full of cases where the easy way out has been discarded for moral principles.

I count myself fortunate in that I have seen the whole country and known men of every calling. But with the final test of war I consider my character fully developed. Thus at my early age my earthly mission is already fulfilled and I am prepared to die with just one regret—that I could not devote myself to making your declining years more happy by being with you; but you will live in peace and freedom and I shall have directly contributed to that, so here again my life will not have been in vain.

Your loving Son, ————.'

This airman's letter has had the effect, so the Editor of *The New World* confessed in the *Times* of June 19, of completing his conversion from pacifism.

A not less significant testimony is that contributed by the well-known and deeply respected Quaker scholar and educationist, Dr. H. G. Wood, to *The Friend* and published on June 7 :

> 'In the present crisis, when the British people cannot withdraw from the conflict and make peace with Hitler except by the complete surrender of honour and independence, Friends, in my judgment, cannot rightly remain neutral in their sympathies and cannot rightly engage in any form of political pacifist propaganda. Our testimony against all war is not a testimony in favour of any and every kind of peace, and we do wrong to cry "Peace, peace," when there is no possibility of a peace which a Christian can approve.'

The war is seen by an increasing multitude to be an arena in which Christian democracy, contending for its ideals of freedom, justice and humanity, is matched against a Macchiavelian Totalitarianism which does not hesitate to use the grossest treachery, tyranny and cruelty to achieve its ends. It is folly to proclaim that because a cause is good it must triumph. The powers of darkness have often prevailed in human history, and not least because the good cause was much better than its supporters and their methods. But in any case the question of victory is for moral beings secondary.

> 'Tis not in mortals to command success,
> But we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it.'

### The Chaplains of the Forces.

There is no more difficult pastoral work than that of a chaplain on active service. Many question the value of his work, and he himself may even be led to doubt whether it is really worth while in its more routine and conventional aspects. It will cheer a body of good men and those who believe that the Christian religion has a particular value in times of danger and difficulty to read the article in the *Daily Telegraph* of June 8 recounting the heroic and devoted conduct of our British chaplains during the embarkation at Dunkirk. Their conduct has won the commendation of their commanding officers and the friendship of the men, many of whom have expressed the desire when their unit is reconstituted to have their own padre with them again. Their coolness in conducting service under fire, and in ministering to the wounded and the dying, their refusal to seek safety before the last of their men had embarked, have all been noted in official despatches. In situations which must

have strained the courage and discipline of experienced soldiers, our chaplains, many of them new to such experience, have won the respect and regard of those for whom deeds count.

Sir Arnold Wilson, a stern judge of the character and conduct of his subordinates and associates in warfare, paid a high tribute to the influence and heroism of the 286 chaplains of all denominations who served in the sanguinary Mesopotamian campaigns of the Great War. In *Loyalties, Mesopotamia, 1914-1920* (chapter viii, Vol. II), he cites the tributes paid to the chaplains by General Sir Percy Lake and his successors, Maude and Marshall. 'These,' adds Sir Arnold, 'are not perfunctory tributes: they are authoritative expressions of contemporary opinion.' Our Mesopotamian administrator expressed surprise that the Church press in reviewing his volumes drew no attention to this feature of his memoirs. There is no doubt that on other fronts in the Great War the chaplains played an equally notable part, and Toc H became their most enduring and inspiring memorial.

In the present war our chaplains are emulating the devoted services of their predecessors.

### Bureaucratic Democracy or Theocratic Democracy?

The moral re-armament movement, very largely organized and worked by lay people, is helping to provide for many what they need in these difficult times and in the dark days which must needs lie ahead. It is becoming painfully clearer that democracy, organized and led by bureaucracy, is inadequate in time of great national stress and strain. Democracy, to be effective in such times, necessitates some other basis than itself. It needs to be united to theocracy, faith in the government of God, and the heroic resolution first and foremost to be loyal at all costs to His righteous and loving will in our personal, social and political life.

This is the basis of the moral re-armament movement as indicated by the following extract from their recent circular, *The Strength of a Nation*:

> 'From an aircraft-carrier on the high seas, a naval officer recently wrote home: "I know of no training which can so teach a man discipline, courage, unselfishness and initiative as learning to listen to God."'

To-day, when every home has become a front-line trench, the entire corporate life of our nation must be fortified with this experience. Love of country calls on everyone to make his greatest contribution to the nation's unity and strength.

Now, if ever, is the moment to draw on all our resources. For inner strength is not a privilege for the few but a necessity for us all. The times demand that we find the power to resist every weakening and divisive influence. We cannot afford the fear, self-indulgence and bitterness which clog the mind. We must re-arm against the insidious disloyalty which betrays in our own lives the moral standards on which national morale depends. A break must be made with every vestige of that subtle self-seeking which even in a national emergency still pursues a personal end.

Millions are hourly tuning in to hear the news, with fear and hope in their hearts. There is available to all men the priceless privilege of contact with a Source of power and information. Those who listen to that Voice find new hope, new energy, new initiative. They are endowed with an inner strength which is proof against uncertainty, hardship or bereavement. They have discovered the key to true co-operation. Not only are they empowered to give their utmost in their own especial task, but wherever they go they build up in those around them the spiritual bulwarks of the nation.

In the words of the Earl of Athlone in his broadcast on Moral Re-armament: "Surely these living principles have ever been the true strength and security of our nation and Empire! In fresh and whole-hearted acceptance of them now lies our moral strength for these dark days, the answer to our fears and to our griefs, and our one sure hope for a new world."'

We need to look upon this war, not as a colossal national disaster, however great its material suffering and losses prove to be, but as a divinely sent opportunity and discipline which, rightly used, should enable the citizens of the British Empire to realize more profoundly the true character of that Empire and to carry forward more resolutely the difficult and dangerous mission of advancing the Kingdom of God upon earth.

### Gospel Pearls and Church Oyster-shells.

One of the features of the present time is the production of small books by distinguished authors. This is due partly to paper shortage and the financial risks attending publication and partly to the inability of the reading public to concentrate on large books in the present period of stress and strain. While many books are the worse for being large, few are the worse for being small.

One of the most arresting of these recently published small books is *Stoic, Christian and Humanist*,[1] by Prof. Gilbert

[1] Allen and Unwin. (1940. 5*s*.)

Murray. Adolf Harnack dubbed Marcion the most Christian of the heretics, and Professor Gilbert Murray must have seemed to his many Christian friends, including the late Bishop Gore, to be the most Christian of the agnostics. Moreover, although an Australian by birth, he is in many ways the most typical of the surviving liberal Oxonians. What could be more typical of this school than Dr. Gilbert Murray's dictum :

> 'To be cock-sure is to be without religion. The essence of religion is the consciousness of a vast unknown.'

He writes in his Preface to the four essays which constitute his little book :

> 'The essays are merely by-products of a long life in which I have had almost constantly in the back of my mind, as a half-conscious preoccupation, the aspirations, problems and moral compulsions which form part at least of the substance of religion' (p. 7).

The result of Dr. Murray's religious evolution so far attained may be summed up in his phrase 'a profound belief in ethics and disbelief in all revelational religions.' This declaration of disbelief in all revelational religion has moved even some liberal Christians to regard Dr. Murray as a non-Christian. Yet everything depends in this declaration upon the meaning given to the ambiguous modern term 'revelational.' Bishop Butler, like his opponents the Deists, classified religion as Natural Religion and Revealed Religion, but our modern studies in religion—historical, comparative, psychological and philosophical—render unreal and misleading the distinction between natural and revealed. All religion is natural for the scientific student of the evolution of religion. All religion is revealed for the Christian theologian who sees in the religious experience of mankind the human response to divine inspiration which is ever seeking to lead humanity onwards and upwards into the true knowledge of the Divine Creator.

The most important question with regard to our religion is not how we have come by it, but whether it is true; and the test of religious truth is not 'who said it?' but, is it justified at the bar of the rational, moral and spiritual consciousness? What Dr. Gilbert Murray has learned to value is not Christian dogma but the Christian spirit. The man who proves in his own character and conduct that he values this Christian spirit is a subject of the Kingdom of God. Whereas the man who does

not, no matter how fanatical or how orthodox his verbal affirmations may be, is outside the Kingdom. That is the plain teaching of Jesus Christ.

What is wrong in the religious world at the present time is that our religious labels do not correspond to moral and spiritual reality. Our labels are libels, in Dean Inge's phrase. What we mean is illustrated by the following passage from Dr. Gilbert Murray's Preface:

> 'The World War and events in post-war Europe have revealed a vast and awful gulf between the "ideologies" or, as I should prefer to say, the fundamental faiths of different kinds of men. The gulf stares us in the face: it is of enormous importance, but it is hard to define. It is certainly not a mere clash between Socialism and capitalism, between Conservatism and a desire for change, between democracy and some other political system. Nor yet is it between Christianity and scepticism. Lenin's Russia is anti-God. Franco's Spain is devoutly Catholic. The German Government is partly Christian, partly Pagan: the Japanese Government Shinto-Buddhist: but much the same foul deeds have been done, and not only done but admired and glorified, by all of them' (p. 10).

We who bear the name of Christian shall never get right until we return to the primal simplicity of the religion of Jesus Christ and use His standard of judgment in religion; and that standard is concerned with moral and spiritual values expressed in a man's conduct and character. We are in grievous need of a religious designation which will unite all men and women who aspire practically to realize this ideal of life in a spiritual fellowship. Cannot our Church authorities reconsider fundamentally the helpless position which characterizes existing Christendom and declare, with St. Paul, that 'If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of His'; and that everyone who possesses this spirit and strives to live by it is a member of the Christian fellowship irrespective of the dogmas he does, or does not, profess verbally: the sacraments which he uses, or does not use: the denominations to which he adheres, or refuses to adhere.

This is the practical conviction forced on us by Dr. Gilbert Murray's little volume dealing with certain aspects of his own religious experience. But who of our Christian leaders, bound by the chains of our ecclesiastical traditions and our denominational differences, will dare in this hour of urgent need to take his stand by Jesus Christ and recognize publicly as essentially Christian all those, and only those, who seek in character and

conduct to reflect Christ's spirit? Until this be done let it not surprise our ecclesiastical rulers that many men of Christian life and character decline membership in the great Christian denominations and regard the Christian religion, as presented in its controversies and schisms, as not only failing to proclaim to humanity the real Christian thing in all its strength and simplicity, but as emphasizing outmoded doctrines which seem to-day to be as incomprehensible as they are incredible. When Robert Browning wrote 'How very hard it is to be a Christian,' he was thinking of the difficulties and temptations which beset those trying to lead the Christian life. Surely these are great enough without the additional difficulties created by our scribes and enforced by our traditionalists.

### Erastian Paganism or Christian Catholicism?

The following editorial note was published in *The Church Times* of July 5, 1940:

> 'Another and this time an extremely disconcerting incident of the week has been the petition of certain Italian bishops to Mussolini to invade Palestine in order that all the Holy Places may be put in charge of the Roman Catholic Church. It has been for years suspected that the large number of Italian Franciscans in the Holy Land, to say nothing of the astute Italian Latin Patriarch in Jerusalem, have been active agents of the Fascist Government, and they have been suspected, too, probably not unjustly, of doing their utmost to assist the Arab risings that have for some years been the chief anxiety of the Mandatory Power. But the incident is depressing because it is one more example of the readiness of the Roman Catholic Church to ally itself with the forces of evil for a purely sectarian end, and with little or no consideration for the welfare of Christendom as a whole, or for the existence of those principles of mercy, justice and freedom which are the bases of Christian civilization.

The lust of power in many disguises has, during her long history, been the besetting sin of the Roman Church and has caused her to misuse her notable virtues and graces as the instruments of evil policies. It is this lust of power which has made her the Tyrant of Christendom, the object of suspicion, fear and detestation which is as surprising to herself as it is to those who are ignorant of her history. Justly apprehensive of the totalitarianism of Hitler and Mussolini, the Roman Catholic Church has too often exhibited in her own policy the same spirit and methods.

There can be no hope for the union of Christendom until the Papal Church is purged of the spirit of temporal acquisitiveness, ecclesiastical aggrandisement and hierarchical domination. Yet what prospect is there of this coming to pass? The Italian conquest of Abyssinia promises the steady destruction of the ancient Ethiopian Church of that land. Should Italy occupy Palestine, a similar fate awaits the Greek Orthodox Church in the Holy Land.

St. Peter's exhortation to his fellow-presbyters has not lost its worth with the passage of time:

> 'Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock' (*I Peter* v, 2, 3).

## IN MEMORIAM

### SIR ARNOLD WILSON,

M.P., K.C.I.E., C.M.G., G.S.I., D.S.O.

WITH the passing from us of Sir Arnold Wilson the British Empire has lost a heroic soldier, the House of Commons a very able and independent member, and the Modern Churchmen's Movement an inspiring and vigorous leader.

The son of that great Liberal Churchman, Canon J. M. Wilson: a pupil of Clifton College, whose first three Headmasters — Percival, Wilson and Glazebrook — were devoted to the Liberal Christian tradition inherited from Thomas Arnold and Frederick Temple of Rugby, it was not surprising that Arnold Wilson should belong to that school of English Churchmanship and that his life as a soldier, political officer and imperial administrator should have deepened his conviction of the need for this kind of Christian religion in our modern world. Brought up in the best English tradition, he loved England, English folk, English ways and English institutions. The Church of England, so closely wedded to the State, the House of Commons opening its sessions with prayer, and so sensitive in times of crisis to the appeal of Christian ideals, seemed to him to present a comprehensive, practical pattern of religious and civic life to which an Englishman could devote himself with

unflinching loyalty and disciplined enthusiasm. He was in these respects an Englishman of the Shakespearean, Miltonic and Tennysonian type rather than the product of post-war internationalism, pacifism and pessimism. He was too robust, too outspoken, too individualist, too scrupulously honourable to be popular in his political and commercial environment. Democracy, save in so far as it stood for individual freedom and human brotherhood, made little appeal to him. It seemed to him that it lacked courage, the power of decisive action, the perception to see things as they really are, and to initiate and implement the exacting but needful policies. He saw democracy as essentially escapist, always out for soft options, and the avoidance of crucial decisions. To those at ease in Zion democracy made its appeal, but not to one of his heroic, strenuous, practical temper. It is not therefore surprising that he was attracted in their earlier stages by Fascism and Nazism. *Punch* stressed this in its doggerel caricature of him as a back bencher member of the House of Commons :

> 'To Mesopotamia
> He is no stranger
> Of Mussolini and Hitler
> No belittler.'

But the evil side of these movements as they developed led him to throw himself whole-heartedly into the Allied fight against them at an age when most men would feel exempt from the obligation of military service, especially as a gunner in the R.A.F. He saw however much more clearly than some of the easy-going optimists who were responsible for the conduct of affairs that a very grim struggle lay ahead of the British Empire, and that all the British Empire stands for could only be preserved at the cost of innumerable personal sacrifices. On entering the Air Force he wrote to his friends :

> 'I go in the spirit of *I Maccabees* iii, 59 : " For it is better for us to die in battle than to look upon the evils of our nation and the holy place." '

Although so devoted to practical activities, he possessed a vigorous mental life. He had a prodigious memory and was a great reader of the Bible and of the Latin and English classics and a devourer of blue books. As a writer he possessed a clear, straightforward style and was the author of a number of stimu-

lating and useful works: *Loyalties* is the standard history of the Mesopotamian campaign and administration for 1914-1920; *Walks and Talks* (originally contributed to the *Nineteenth Century* when he was Editor of that journal) is a delightful picture of English country conditions and outlook in Hertfordshire in the thirties of the present century; *Burial Reform and Funeral Costs* (written in conjunction with Professor Hermann Levy) exhibits his great command of detail and active interest in practical social reform; *Gallantry*, his latest volume, the record of British deeds of daring, constitutes an appropriate pendant to a most noble and heroic life.

We had looked forward to hearing him on 'The Christian Spirit in English Public Life' at the Modern Churchmen's Conference in Oxford in September, although when accepting our invitation to read the paper he remarked on the insecurity of the tenure of life in the service in which he was engaged.

H.D.A.M.

# THE RELIGION OF THOMAS HARDY

By Gamaliel Milner.

WE are all too busy this year to spare much time for centenaries. In any case, the centenary of Thomas Hardy's birth comes too soon after his death for a final verdict on his life and writings. Usually when a well-known writer dies there is a general buzz of appreciation, and his books are for a short time in considerable demand. There follows a period of comparative silence; the conventional eulogies that follow a man to the grave are apt to sound a little hollow: it is too early for the voice of criticism to be heard. Death opens the gate of fame and shuts the gate of envy after it. Too often, however, the fame fades away; it is not every luminary that is found to have a place among the fixed stars.

Whatever may be the final place of Hardy among the great writers of the Victorian age (for to that age he undoubtedly belonged), he will always interest posterity as the great representative of its closing phase, the hour when its sun yet high in heaven was about to set in blood red clouds. His melancholy

will seem to posterity like a presentiment of woes coming on the earth. Take this passage from *The Return of the Native* written in 1878; he is describing Egdon Heath:

> 'It was a spot which returned upon the memory of those who loved it with an aspect of peculiar and kindly congruity. Smiling champaigns of flower and fruit hardly do this, for they are permanently harmonious only with an existence of better reputation as to its issues than the present. . . . Fair prospects wed happily with fair times; but alas, if times be not fair! Men have oftener suffered from the mockery of a place too smiling for their reason than from the oppression of surroundings oversadly tinged. Indeed it is a question if the exclusive reign of orthodox beauty is not approaching its last quarter. The new Vale of Tempe may be a great waste in Thule: human souls may find themselves in closer harmony with external things wearing a sombreness distasteful to our race when it was young.'

This was written when Hardy was thirty-eight, when he was well on his way to fame, when he was finding the entry into literary London unexpectedly easy.

The year 1870, when Hardy, a man who developed slowly, attained the age of thirty, was an ominous date; the Germans got to Paris, and the author of *The Battle of Dorking* wondered if they would ever get to London. Dickens died, and the general public, who had ignored *The Origin of Species*, heard of *The Descent of Man*, in which Darwin, so it was generally understood, had proved that mankind was not a little lower than the Angels but a little higher than the Apes. To uninstructed minds it hardly seemed glad tidings of great joy. There followed the beginning of the decline of Rural England, the decade of low prices and bad harvests. Pessimism was in the air.

When a great man dies or celebrates a centenary, there are axes to be ground. The January number of the *Literary Guide*, the oddly-named organ of the Rationalist Press Association, claims Hardy as a Rationalist, though it has to admit that he was never formally enrolled among their members. In the same issue we find Lucretius described as an Atheist. Anyone reading the *De Natura Rerum* with this idea in his head would be rather startled by its opening, *Mater Aeneadum, Divum hominumque voluptas*. An invocation of *Venus Genetrix*, sole Mistress of the Nature of Things, is a strange opening for an atheist's poem; it is almost as if one should take up *The Literary Guide* and find on the front page an impassioned appeal to the Virgin Mary.

Hardy was as little a Rationalist as Lucretius was an Atheist. The notion of implacable fate hunting down poor weak mortals which we get in some of Hardy's later novels is every bit as anthropomorphic as the conception of a loving heavenly Father, unless we choose to qualify it as theriomorphic, the behaviour of a cat with a wounded bird. Hardy was, in fact, fundamentally a pagan; the actions of the young gods of the older time were often stained by the thoughtless cruelty of youth.

> 'As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods,
> They kill us for their sport.'

But if *The Literary Guide* hailed Hardy as a Rationalist, there were not wanting bishops and clergy to claim him as a Churchman. Time was—the days of the publication of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*—when a bishop flung that 'immoral' work into the fire. (The bishop aforesaid was himself guilty of an act of immorality if, as we have heard, the copy he burned was a borrowed one.) A case can be made out for Hardy's Churchmanship. His father was a member of the church choir, who occupied the gallery of the village church and played upon various musical instruments. The passing of the church band, a sinister event for the Church in the village, is described in *Under the Greenwood Tree*. Young Hardy was brought up Church of England. What that meant may be gathered from his novels; it did not involve any very definite belief about the Trinity or the Atonement or the Sacraments; morbid speculation about doctrine was left to the Dissenters, to fanatics like the Baptist minister in *The Laodicean*. Churchmanship for the villager did include a moderate liking for church services, and especially for church music. Equally implicit was a reverential attitude towards the parson and the squire and the more shadowy powers in the background. Hardy never altogether lost that feeling of reverence; in his old age he wondered why some of his detractors had not accused him of being 'churchy.'

He was the son of a village stonemason. The family to which he belonged had once, it is said, been landowners in a small way; there were many households in the West Country which, like the Durbeyfields in *Tess*, cherished memories of past greatness. Like Stephen Guest in *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, the country-bred youth entered an architect's office in London; it

was a firm which specialized in the restoration, not to say devastation, of village churches. In connection with his life as an architect he made a friend and, eventually, found a wife. The friend was a man who came to a tragic end; he was the brother of Handley Moule, the Bishop of Durham, and of a well-known Cambridge Fellow. Their father was a fervent Evangelical of the old school, the Vicar of Fordington near Dorchester. Henry Moule was probably the first cultivated man with whom Hardy was on intimate terms. He seems to be the original of Knight in *A Pair of Blue Eyes*; probably he also sat for Angel Clare in *Tess* and for other educated characters in the Wessex Novels. Henry Moule had, it is probable, reacted against his evangelical upbringing and was more or less what was coming to be called an agnostic. A vague agnosticism, what a character in *Joseph Vance* calls 'orthodoubt,' was the prevailing tone in intellectual circles when young Hardy went up to London, and being, like most pagans, of a conformist turn of mind, he more or less adopted it himself; at any rate he thought it was the proper attitude for educated people to take up. Probably in Henry Moule's rooms he sometimes met his friend's brothers, the Cambridge don and the future bishop; one may conjecture that their attitude to the young man from the country was not very cordial. In *Tess*, as Angel's brothers, they are embalmed, like flies in amber, as a couple of pretentious prigs.

An event happened in 1870 which served to increase Hardy's churchiness. On a professional visit to St. Juliot in Cornwall to restore the grey carcase of a mediaevalism whose spirit had fled (so he wrote forty years afterwards; he probably didn't put it quite like that to the Vicar at the time), he met and fell in love with the lady who is, presumably, the original of Elfride Swancourt, the sister of the incumbent. His marriage to Miss Emma Lavinia Gifford took place in 1874, the year after the publication of *A Pair of Blue Eyes*. Hardy had married into a clerical family, for his wife's uncle was an archdeacon. The sketches from clerical life in Hardy's novels are usually drawn in a kindly spirit; evidently he liked clergymen as a class, whatever he thought of their doctrines. His churchmanship was of the old-fashioned type; he liked the old tunes, the old ways; he did not care much for Anglo-Catholics; when he went to Oxford to

receive his honorary degree, he insisted on being shown the Martyrs' Memorial.

The struggles which too often precede the recognition of a literary genius seem not to have been unduly severe in Hardy's case. Gissing, according to Mr. Morley Roberts, was in the habit of asking about any new writer, 'Has he starved?' The Wessex countryman would probably have answered that he had never been such a fool. He stuck to architecture till he saw his way to making a livelihood in letters. Almost from the first his writings pleased both the general public and the cultivated minority. The violent antithesis between the Best Seller and the Literary Artist was not so sharp in the 'seventies. Popular education was in its infancy. Hardy did not begin by trying to force unpopular opinions down people's throats. *Under the Greenwood Tree*, his first success, is as charming and idyllic a tale as can be imagined. It might have been printed with trifling excisions in a parish magazine. There was nothing in the outward circumstances of Hardy's life to explain the deep undercurrent of pessimism to be noted in what came to be called the Wessex Novels. We have already quoted a tonic passage from *The Return of the Native*. Gradually he discarded the conventional happy ending. Pressure from his publisher made him end *The Return of the Native* with a wedding, but the lifeless tone of the last chapter indicates sulky compliance with common form. *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, the story of King Saul in nineteenth century life, is Tragedy unrelieved.

But the open breach between Hardy and British respectability came with the publication in 1891 of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. It would require a lengthy dissertation on the Victorian attitude towards sex to explain precisely why our grandparents were shocked, or pretended to be shocked, by the book. It was not because it contained the story of a seduction; so do *Adam Bede* and *David Copperfield* and lots of 'healthy' Victorian novels. Briefly, it was Hardy's barely concealed opinion that the seduction did not matter much, or at any rate ought not to have mattered much, and his defiant assertion on the title-page that the book was the story of a Pure Woman. Financially, probably, Hardy gained by the scandal over *Tess*, but his mind was embittered by attacks on what he felt, perhaps justly, to be his masterpiece.

Anyhow, he burnt his boats with the publication in 1895 of *Jude the Obscure*. Characteristically he chose as a motto for his heretical novel a verse of Scripture, 'The letter killeth.' On the surface *Jude* might be read as a tract on the mischiefs of the marriage law, a precursor of 'Holy Deadlock.' There is a savage irony in making the consummation of Jude's moral ruin to be his return to the woman who was, on Catholic principles, his lawful spouse. Sue's return to Anglicanism and her wedded husband was her spiritual suicide. But one doubts if any reform of the divorce laws would have saved Jude or Sue. Perhaps a better motto for the book would have been, 'The flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh.' One side of Jude's nature drew him to Sue, the other to Arabella.

'*Madame Bovary, c'est moi*,' said Flaubert of the vapourish sentimental adulteress who is the central character of his masterpiece, and many of us, if we are honest with ourselves, will say, 'There is a lot of Jude in me.' Sue Bridehead and Jude Fawley are the representatives in fiction of those misfits and disharmonic creatures of which the modern world is full, cultured proletarians, religious-minded sceptics, adrift on a sea of contradictions without chart or compass. They are the raw material out of which Nazis and Fascists and Bolshevists are fashioned in our modern chaos:

> 'Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds
> Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things . . .
> Gorgons and Hydras and Chimaeras dire.'

In spite of its value as a social document, an adumbration of things to come, we are not persuaded that *Jude* as a novel is greater than *Tess*: the horrible in the scale of art is lower than the tragic.

The uproar over 'Jude the Obscene,' as some misguided person called it, was terrific, and the end of it was that Hardy at the age of fifty-six, with more than thirty more years to live, decided to close his career as a novelist. He had an income sufficient for his needs and one which increased with the steady sale of his works. He enjoyed during his lifetime the reputation of a classic. Lionel Johnson, one of the brilliant failures of the 'nineties, wrote a book called *The Art of Thomas Hardy*. The yelpings of the self-appointed guardians of 'purity' died away;

before Hardy's death, so far had the pendulum swung, his treatment of sex had come to seem timid and Victorian to the younger generation.

Did the nice people with nasty minds, those exponents of Victorian prudery — an infinite capacity, we may define it, for being shocked — really deprive us of masterpieces which never saw the light? Possibly not. There are signs in *Jude* of exhaustion and weariness. Hardy had played his part; it would have been an error of judgement to linger superfluous on the stage. He had been the prose Theocritus of the last days of Old England. It is a mistake to spend old age in trying to ape the successes of youth.

*'Toujours vieux singe est déplaisant.'* (Villon.)

Of Hardy's later career as a poet we cannot now speak particularly. He had a real lyrical gift, and many of his short poems have true distinction. We confess that we do not find *The Dynasts* Aeschylean; the best parts of it read like lost chapters from the Wessex Novels. The Spirits of the Pities and the Years who play the part of the Chorus to the human puppets seem to us more spectral than impressive; they remind us of Shelley's personified abstractions.

The relative good luck that accompanied Hardy throughout life gave him an appreciative biographer in the person of the companion of his later years, his second wife. We find from this admirable biography that he resented the view often attributed to him that the Ruler of the Universe — the President of the Immortals, to use the phrase which in *Tess* he borrows from Aeschylus — was actuated by hostility to His creatures. We acquit Hardy of any desire to revive a fable of Gnostic dotage, the belief in a Demiurge. We would not denounce him as a Manichee, or suppose that, like Mr. Toobad in *Nightmare Abbey*, he held that the supreme dominion of the world was for wise purposes given over for a while to the Evil Principle, though there is at the moment of writing (June, 1940) much that renders that theory specious. Metaphysics were not in his line; he thought of Nature as impersonal, though vaguely feminine, an entity a little like the Something not ourselves that makes for Righteousness of Matthew Arnold (in Hardy's view it usually made for Unrighteousness).

It is not very easy to determine how much of this attitude is derived from primitive Wessex Paganism, the belief of the villager, and how much of it comes from the Wessex novelist's cultured acquaintance. But on the whole we accept his assurance that the vision of an ironic Fate is a literary artifice to express a fact which Christian philosophy, as well as any other, has to take into account, that this is a strange world.

'Damn the nature of things,' said the erudite Porson. The vast mass of superstitions whose thick undergrowth can only be kept in check, not extirpated, by philosophy and science springs ultimately from a feeling which seems congenital to us that the Power behind Nature is given to envy, that he resents any undue confidence on the part of his creatures, that he wants to keep us in our place, a humble place, lest we should be as gods, knowing good and evil. That God is love is a paradox, not a platitude.

Man feels that he is a stranger upon earth, at war with himself. Civilization does nothing to lessen this strain; it tends rather to increase it. In Hardy's novels the peasants lead a life which, compared with the fate-driven existence of their betters, seems happy and dignified. The Totalitarian State might solve the difficulty by turning the community into a hive or an ant-heap, but this would mean the death of the human soul.

Hardy wrote just when the wave of optimism which began with the age of enlightenment was on the turn. He lived to see the first Great War, but it did not bring him to despair; it awoke within him the virtue of the countryman, the love of his native soil. Antaeus in the grip of Hercules revived when he touched the earth; it may be that our so-called culture has got to get back to simple elemental things. Captain Hardy in *The Dynasts*, watching the dying Nelson, recalls his home in Dorsetshire,

> 'The snug village under Blackdon Hill
> Where I was born. The tumbling stream, the garden,
> The placid look of the grey dial there,
> Marking unconsciously this bloody hour,
> And the red apples on my father's trees
> Just now full ripe.'

# DID JESUS DIE ON THE CROSS?

By The Editor.

SIR Francis Fremantle, M.D., M.P., in a letter published in our June issue, deals with his difficulty in believing that Jesus Christ really died on the Cross. That difficulty is not a new one, although the reasons that have led to it have been widely different. Among Gnostic Christians in primitive Christian times there were current two views of the crucifixion both of which denied the physical death of our Lord :

(1) That Jesus never possessed a body of flesh and blood but merely a phantasmal body—what modern spiritualists would call an etheric body—and that He was crucified only in appearance, not in reality.

(2) That Jesus of Nazareth and the Eternal Christ were two distinct beings, the one human, the other divine. The divine Christ entered the man Jesus at His baptism in Jordan and left Him on the cross when Jesus uttered the words 'My God, my God (or my Strength, my Strength), why hast Thou forsaken me?'

There is an Islamic legend, possibly derived from some form of oriental heretical Christianity, that Judas was crucified in the place of Jesus. Apostolic Christianity, however, vigorously maintained the physical death of Jesus Christ on the cross. Nevertheless the insertion of the word 'dead' in the Apostles' Creed indicates that the Church authorities were well aware that there were some Christians who denied the death of Jesus on the cross, which view the Church deliberately excluded. Possibly the statement in the First *Epistle of St. Peter*, 'Because Christ also suffered for sins . . . being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit : in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison' (iii, 18-20), is intended to enforce the view that the period in the tomb was for Jesus not one of mere unconsciousness, but that the spirit when definitely separated from the body by death was actively engaged in another sphere. Certain it is that the general stream of Christian conviction from apostolic times affirmed the physical

death of Jesus on the cross. All four Gospels agree with the well-known statement of Tacitus, the Roman historian, that Christ was put to death by Pontius Pilate in the reign of the Emperor Tiberius,[1] and all four are agreed that He died as the result of crucifixion. Yet in our most archaic Gospel, that of Mark, Pilate is recorded, when Joseph of Arimathea on the evening of the crucifixion asked for the body of Jesus, to have

> 'marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he learned it of the centurion, he granted the corpse to Joseph' (*Mk.* xv, 44-46).

The word corpse (*ptoma*) should he noted here: it means a body from which the life has passed. *Mt.* and *Lk.* omit this incident of Pilate's marvelling and investigation, possibly because they have explicitly stated that Jesus had expired upon the cross (*Mt.* xxvii, 51, 'yielded up his spirit'; *Lk.* xxiii, 46, 'he gave up the Ghost'; *cf. Mk.* xv, 37, 'gave up the ghost'). St. John's Gospel (xix, 31-42) relates that when the Roman soldiers came to remove His body from the cross they found that Jesus was 'already dead.' Then they pierced His side with a spear, intent evidently on making assurance doubly sure. This removal of the corpse of Jesus from the cross on the evening of His crucifixion supports Josephus, the Jewish historian, who states that as required by Jewish law the bodies of crucified criminals were in Palestine always removed from the cross before sunset. In view of such a practice, can anyone doubt that the executioners made sure of the death of the crucified? It seems to us, therefore, highly improbable that Jesus could have escaped physical death upon the cross. It is quite true that He was there for only a few hours. There is a possible difference of three hours in the accounts given by John and the three Synoptists—in any case He was not there more than nine hours in all.

To the careful student of Mark's Gospel in the original Greek the death of Jesus on the cross does not seem so improbable as Sir Francis Fremantle presupposes. When Jesus was led out to be crucified He was in a state of collapse. This was no doubt due to His immense exertions during the preceding week; due also to his under-nutriment (*cf.* the hunger which prompted Him to seek fruit on the barren fig tree); His agony

[1] Tacitus, *Ann.* xv, 44 (*supplicio adfectus erat*).

in the Garden of Gethsemane; His cruel treatment by the servants of the High Priest; His scourging by the Roman soldiers. Mark relates not only that Jesus was unable to bear His cross, but that He Himself was borne to the place of execution by the Roman soldiers. This of course conflicts sharply with John's account, which omits any reference to Simon the Cyrenian bearing the cross and states that Jesus bore the cross for Himself, which has led to the full force of the Markan narrative being obscured in Christian tradition and in our English translation. The words in *Mark* (xv, 22), 'and they bring him unto the place Golgotha,' can be, and should be, translated 'they bear him, or carry him, unto the place Golgotha.' Medical authorities have sought for the precise physical causes of what has seemed to them to be the premature decease of Jesus. The most elaborate research on this point was produced in 1847 by Dr. Stroud in his volume *The Physical Cause of the Death of Christ*, his conclusion being that it was due to rupture of the heart.

What however weighs most heavily with Sir Francis Fremantle is not the lack of evidence for the death of Jesus on the cross in our New Testament Scriptures, but that (1) there are references in the New Testament to post-Resurrection experiences of Jesus with His disciples which are on the physical plane, *e.g.* His eating with them or in their presence, the piece of broiled fish and the breaking of bread, the handling of His body by Mary Magdalene and St. Thomas, above all St. Peter's statement in *Acts* x, 40, 41 :

> 'Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.'

(2) The fact that if Jesus died on the cross then His *post mortem* intercourse with His disciples, if not of a purely psychical or spiritual character, was plainly miraculous, and Sir Francis regards such physical *post mortem* experiences as scientifically impossible. He finds in his philosophy no place for a miracle of this kind.

We are unable to attach any weight to any argument for the Resurrection based upon either the possibility or the impossibility of miracles. Writing from the purely critical, historical standpoint, it seems to us : (1) That the weight of evidence for

Jesus having suffered physical death on the cross is conclusive. (2) That He held personal intercourse with His disciples after His death on the cross is also conclusive. It was this intercourse which convinced them that He had triumphed over death and that He was the God-given leader He had claimed to be, and it was this which turned them from cowards into heroes and impelled them to proclaim His Gospel to mankind. (3) What is not so historically convincing is the precise nature of this *post mortem* personal intercourse of Jesus with His disciples. The evidence for its being on the physical plane is, we judge, less weighty than the evidence of its being on the psychical plane.

(*a*) The evidence for the intercourse being on the physical plane is open to suspicion, and for this curious reason, that the Docetic Gnostic heresy, which was very early and very popular and taught that Jesus Christ was a Spiritual Being not possessed of an ordinary human body, led the Christian Church, in opposing Docetism, to stress every point which might be used to prove the physical humanity of Jesus. St. Ignatius, writing about 110 A.D., goes to extreme lengths in this kind of argument. The alleged physical experiences of the resurrection body of Jesus come in this class.

(*b*) There are a number of passages in the New Testament, certainly earlier than the resurrection physical experience incidents related in the writings of St. Luke and St. John, which point to the *post* resurrection experiences of the disciples as being not physical but psychical. St. Paul in *I Cor.* xv, written certainly within twenty-five years of the crucifixion of Jesus, and claiming to have the whole weight of apostolic testimony behind it, relates a series of resurrection appearances of Jesus beginning with His appearance to Peter and concluding with His appearance to Paul. In every case St. Paul uses the same word (*ōphthe*), 'he appeared to.' There are at least three Pauline accounts of the appearance of Jesus to himself on the Damascus road, and all of them represent that resurrection appearance as psychical rather than physical. It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that the other resurrection appearances were of the same kind. It must also be remembered that this account of St. Paul is some years earlier than even the earliest of our Gospels. These considerations, combined with the fact that there is a

definite tendency in primitive Christian narratives, not towards spiritualizing, but towards materializing religious experience, adds further weight to the argument in favour of the resurrection appearances of Jesus being not physical but psychical. Therefore we are justified in concluding that the body in which Jesus appeared was a spiritual body such as we may suppose St. Paul had in mind in *II Cor.* iv, 16—v. 4, where he refers to the spiritual body, or house which is from heaven, in which he himself hopes to dwell when he has departed this life. If this conclusion be historically sound, then it may be claimed that the resurrection of Jesus was no more and no less miraculous than well-attested cases preserved in the records of psychical research. It may, however, be claimed that for many Christians possessed of philosophical culture or scientific training their belief that Jesus Christ survived death depends, not upon the weight of the historical evidence that can be adduced for it, but on their most profound rational, moral and spiritual convictions as to the constitution of the universe, the purpose of the creative process, and the place and significance of human personality in that process. Where it seems to us the resurrection historical evidence has special value is as a proof that Jesus Christ, after His physical death, did hold communion with His disciples which convinced them not only that He was victoriously alive, but that He was spiritually co-operating with them in carrying out His mission to mankind.

If Sir Francis Fremantle can accept this presentation of the case as valid, he will recognize that here is a belief in the resurrection which liberates him who holds it from both materialistic and miraculous views of that event, and which really has more to be said for it than a theory of the resurrection which assumes that Jesus never died upon the cross and that His resurrection was merely a physical resuscitation. The enthusiastic, heroic, triumphant character of the primitive apostolic faith in the resurrection is not satisfied by supposing it to be based upon association with the physically moribund Jesus during a period of several weeks after His escape from the sepulchre. So victorious a faith demands, as in the case of St. Paul, an experience of another and higher order.

# THE FUTURE OF THEOLOGY

By Professor S. A. Cook, Litt.D., F.B.A.

IN this age of widespread uncertainty there are too many writers interested in the prospects of Western civilization to allow the assumption that the future of theology will rest solely with the professional theologian and the Church. There is, to be sure, a certain antipathy to theology as such, but, on the other hand, (*a*) the comparative study of religions forces to the front questions of immediate theological and philosophical import, and (*b*) the awakened religious consciousness, once it begins to reflect, seeks to think out the content and implications of the new experience. Apathy and the failure to feel the necessity of pursuing religious questions may indeed indicate the shallowness of a man's religion; but the blame for any gulf between theology and the modern mind must not be placed on the latter alone. Meanwhile the social and political changes throughout the world, and the increasing prominence of simpler and unsophisticated types of mind with their desire for direct answers to their questions, should stimulate a critical enquiry into the future of theology, seeing that this future may turn upon a restatement of personal conviction — that only when one has rediscovered and restated what is real and true for one personally can one proceed to the more definitely intellectual argumentation. In other words, it may be found that the road to be taken to-day is from religion to theology and philosophy.

Comparative Religion abundantly illustrates the varying degrees of importance attached to 'human' and to 'supernatural' or 'divine' factors. A three-fold formula can be framed. While (*a*) '*Thy* will be done' symbolizes resignation and submission, (*b*) the other extreme is that of complete human assurance, or *αὐτάρκεια*, as illustrated in crass magic, '*My* will be done.' But in between is the thoroughly characteristic implicit or explicit co-operation of man and the unseen personal (or impersonal) powers, '*Our* will be done.' Furthermore, the story of David and Nabal, where the future king is saved from taking things into his own hands (*I Sam.* xxv, 26, 31, 34, 39), exemplifies the

question, Is one to avenge oneself or to leave vengeance to God? (cf. *Deut.* xxxii, 35; *Rom.* xii, 19, etc.). There are the two extremes of (1) *laisser faire*, of leaving things to a personal or impersonal world-process, and (2) of forcefully imposing one's will, confident that all the factors are at one's disposal. On the one hand, men have constantly acted as the conscious or unconscious instruments or representatives of some higher purpose and, on the other, there have been crimes and evils so gross that mere human beings feel helpless; it then becomes an act of faith that there is a supreme Righteousness, and that both good and evil have their appropriate recompense. We touch the bedrock of life's problems — the interrelation between the human and the divine.

When the Cambridge Platonist, John Smith, said 'such as men themselves are, such will God Himself seem to be,' we realize that within certain limits 'God,' that is, what God means for men, depends upon themselves. To this extent men testify, even unwittingly, to their conceptions of God or of Reality, and to the sort of light that illuminates them.[1] If God 'hardens' men's hearts, there is what has been called a 'coincident willing.'[2] Indeed, we have to admit that although there is *something* that helps men to help themselves and impels them along their courses, that power or factor cannot always be styled 'divine.' The innumerable occasions that have forced men to postulate evil spirits or demons, and the like, point to the feeling that there were superhuman or supernatural influences for which the friendly gods or spirits, upholders of social welfare, could not be held responsible. The objective value of every subjective 'spiritual' experience must always be tested.

At the same time we recognize that God's Self-giving is limited by man's capacity and his readiness to receive. But when that stage has been reached God does not act, as it were, automatically. Meister Eckhart's words are familiar, 'If I am

[1] cf. *Ps.* xviii, 25 sq., *Is.* xliii, 10, *Matt.* vi, 23, and see *TB* (= the writer's *Truth of the Bible*), p. 106.

[2] H. W. Robinson in *Record and Revelation*, p. 320. For a Jewish parallel, see Montefiore and Loewe, *A Rabbinic Anthology*, p. 293 (No. 756). Here God increasingly sanctifies the pious and defiles the unclean; as Mr. Montefiore says, 'down either road — whether to righteousness or wickedness — there is a push from God.'

pure God must of His own nature give Himself to me'; but it is easy to see how such a conviction, with all its spiritual profundity, *could* pave the way for an empty ritualism, a mechanical process, like the sacrificial formula *do ut des*.

I wish to stress the general character of the constant interrelation between God and Man, the Spirit and the human temple, any energizing spiritual or related influence and the body, the form and the material. Spenser's couplet furnishes a useful preliminary generalization:

> 'For of the soul the body form doth take,
> For soul is form and doth the body make.'

But soul and body are complementary, in so far as the sort of soul (spirit, etc.) and the sort of body answer to one another. The same stimulus will have different effects (as in the Parable of the Sower and the Seed), and although men may undergo similar typical overwhelming experiences (*e.g.* conversion, love, war) the diverse results are very largely conditioned by themselves. The point is that the 'body' can both prepare for the influence of the 'spirit' and contribute to its quality and effectiveness. The Divine Potter may be limited by the intractable nature of the clay; but the clay is also responsible for its own adaptability. The fact is that we have to find some way of understanding 'bad' religion, unethical conceptions of the Sacred, and the subjective, undisciplined 'spirituality' that is antinomian and hostile to the progress of religion; we have to find a way of co-ordinating, if not of hierarchizing, a great mass of comparable data, and of doing justice to both the essential points of contact and the essential differences.

Two points should be noticed: (*a*) When we consider the creativeness of Nature, her spontaneity and her ruthlessness, we must not be surprised if the human animal with an ingenuity that often strikes us as diabolical should fall below the human level and be more brutish than the beasts. But if we see much that makes us think of a veritable Satanism, or of a conflict between actual Good and Evil Powers, such a dualism — like polytheism — shirks the great problems. Only when, like Israel of old, we think as consistent monotheists, and seek to co-ordinate and unify our thoughts, do we gain, as did Israel, a progressive insight into the realities of the Universe and the

freedom granted to its creatures. Further (*b*), when we think of Nature and of Man, instead of identifying the diverse levels of the inorganic and the organic, we should recognize a hierarchy, that is, diverse *qualities* of structure, life, consciousness, spirit, etc. But though we begin empirically with a pluralistic and hierarchical universe, sooner or later only a monotheistic approach to the understanding of the universe — of God's universe — unfolds some of its secrets.[3]

In considering the qualitatively diverse sorts of interrelation between 'spirit' (soul, etc.) and 'body' we perceive the extent to which men are evidently moved by their conceptions of their gods (Yahweh, Indra, Zeus, Thor, etc.) and by their convictions of what is most real and true. As we follow the development in and behind the Bible, we can realize how vital has been the difference between (*a*) the Hebraic conception of the God of the Universe and his exceptionally intimate relation to his people Israel, his firstborn, and (*b*) the Christian conception of the way to God through Christ. With the latter conception of the *personal* approach is the—primarily impersonal—Greek Logos, the immanent Reason or Order, making a cosmos out of chaos, and ordering aright the otherwise chaotic thoughts and acts of man. The Logos, by uniting God, Man and Nature in a way that Hebrew religion fails to do, severs Christianity and Judaism. It is noteworthy, therefore, that while the fine ethical Zoroastrian god Ahura-Mazda was a creation that had much in common with Israel's Yahweh, Israel rightly repudiated Persian dualism. But Israel also made little or no use of the Persian and earlier (Indo-Iranian) conception of a universal Right, uniting or at least co-ordinating Nature and Man.[4] The grand epoch-making monotheism of the Second Isaiah, with the doctrine of the God of the Universe, was followed by a definitely narrowing and nationalistic trend (*e.g. Is.* lxiii, 1-6). A strict monotheism was supplemented by the well-known Jewish and Hellenistic

[3] For the notion of a hierarchy, cf. *TB* pp. 198 n.1, 306. Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World,* p. 338 (Everyman's Library ed., p. 324), while favouring the idea of a universal mind or Logos, observes that 'science cannot tell whether the world-spirit is good or evil, and its halting argument for the existence of a God might equally well be turned into an argument for the existence of a Devil.' See below, n. 8.

[4] See *TB,* Index, *s.* Arta.

tendencies to the recognition of a Divine Presence (or Face), Word, Angel (or Messenger) and Wisdom; and these aspects or intermediaries paved the way for the Christian Logos. But Philo of Alexandria has shown pretty clearly how far the old religion could go in its use of the Logos idea, and the gulf soon opened between the earlier nationalistic monotheism, which was very far from being practicable and in touch with the age, and the new universalistic type of monotheism inaugurated by the Jewish and, in due course, the Gentile Christians. It is precisely the restatement and reassertion of a unifying monotheism, God in Nature and in Man — the interrelation between God, Man and the Universe, in all its implications — that is the most urgent of needs to-day.

The combination — in Christ — of the *personal* approach to God and of the more *intellectual* concept of the Logos, the universal Order and Reason, is not absolutely unique in itself. In Comparative Religion, besides the gods who primarily stand in a personal relationship to men, there are those who are reckoned to be the causes of unusual and unexpected phenomena, or who maintain those that are regular and vital (rain, crops, etc.). Both Yahweh in the Old Testament and Christ in the New are supreme over Man and Nature, so that Religion makes man at home, as it were, in the Universe: the God men worship is the God of both man and of his physical environment. At the same time, the absolute transcendence of God, in spite of the intimate bond between Yahweh and Israel, is emphatically set forth in the Old Testament, while in the New Christ, the unifying spirit of the new Israel of God, the Christian body, while effectively God, is, nevertheless, subordinate to the Father. That is to say, along with the uniqueness of the intermediary between God and the world, namely, Israel and Christ respectively, there is the consciousness of an ultimate personal Reality who has thus revealed Himself. This Reality transcends the instruments whereby it is mediated, and while we should agree that the old Israel was not always a good guide to the Godhead, in Christendom itself there have been conceptions of Jesus Christ that surely do not lead men to the Father. Experience has proved that it is necessary to preserve the complementary conceptions of divine immanence and transcendence

—of the Infinite Being of the One who has given men an approach unto Him—only in this way has Religion been dynamic and progressive.[5]

Whatever mediates between God and man at one time leads to a fuller truth, but at another is felt to be unintelligible, or even a veritable hindrance. Thus doctrines — 'bodies' of thought — can be said to be alive or dead; it depends, not necessarily upon their ideological completeness or incompleteness, but upon the place they hold in us. If, then, it is said that the Bible or Theology — or at least certain aspects of them — are no longer life-giving and inspiring as they once were, it is the 'spirit' that needs recapturing as truly as the 'body' (or 'letter' of a teaching) may need restatement or reframing. Now the 'spirit' of an organic body, no less than that of a life-giving body of thought, is not to be regarded as wholly immanent: every form of immanentism is imperfect if it finds all the factors of progressive development within a *closed* social, doctrinal or ideological system. Outside our closed systems is that which will correct, supplement or develop them, even as our purely intellectual theories and hypotheses, helpful within limits, and with an 'immanent' *élan* of their own, may suffer because of the restricted field they cover.[6] To put it generally, our thought-systems are part of a larger field or environment which we cannot neglect with impunity; and we may say that they are 'transcended' by that ultimate whole wherein are the factors as yet neglected that will make for their further development. But our thought-systems are our way of employing the data of experience, and what has just been said must be stated more concretely.

The problem of immanence and transcendence involves the nature of the total field or environment indispensable for our life and thought. Invariably we *imply* that we are integral parts of some larger whole; and of some vaster existence all our

[5] On the triangular relationship between God, man and the representative intermediary, cf. *The Modern Churchman,* September, 1939, p. 310 sq.

[6] Consider, e.g., (*a*) Deuteronomy; (*b*) the body of Deuteronomic literature; (*c*) the Old Testament; (*d*) the Bible; (*e*) Palestinian and cognate literature, and note how the more restricted problem may be bound up with the larger, circumambient fields. Or again, consider Christianity and Comparative Religion.

deeper experiences make us conscious. Yet a candid survey of the data of ecstasy, mysticism, the numinous, the psychic and the occult should warn us that if we are — or seem to be — taken out of and away from this world of space-time we do not necessarily become partakers of an existence that is of real ethical and spiritual value. Quite the contrary — the experience may mar, and not make, human life. Hence the deeper experiences and their content need canalizing, guiding and disciplining, if we are to live sanely and soberly: that is the essential function of a Church and a theology. There should be, then, a real continuity, despite the occasions of discontinuity: the true human life and the true spiritual life are not radically discontinuous; and, to generalize, true transcendence is along the line of true immanence. The experiences that are felt to bring us near to some ultimate spiritual reality, and we seem, in some sense, to 'transcend' the world of space-time, should not leave us 'escapists' or the self-engrossed 'elect' of some 'other-worldly' realm, rather should we become more 'immanent' in the world, more truly part of it, and so help others to approach Divine Reality through the world and not by renouncing and denouncing it. That, at least, is surely the Christian ideal (cf. *John* xxi, 15), and it finds a counterpart in the Eastern Bodhisattva, who works for others instead of taking refuge in Nirvana. The true life combines immanence and transcendence even on the human level;[7] but even those who are helpless victims of their daily physical and material environment can participate in and contribute to that spiritual environment in which all men — consciously or otherwise — 'live and move and have their being.'[8]

The world's religions, viewed as a whole, testify to remarkable intuitions and convictions, and those we personally accept as true should be the starting-points of our theology and philo-

[7] cf. John Macmurray, *The Structure of Religious Experience* (1936), p. 38—with caution.

[8] 'Christian' philosophy starts from the Logos and Christ the Son of the transcendent Father, the Creator of all things. There is a gap between the religious experience and the intellectual enquiry into origins. Analysis takes us back to an endless cycle or chain of mutually involved definitions —a circular argument (*TB* pp. 262, 305), and all our unsound monisms are shipwrecked on the irreducibility of the categories to a single supreme category (*cf.* A. E. Taylor's lecture on Aquinas, p. 27 sq.).

sophy. To-day, though not unaware of our complete indebtedness to Hebrew, Greek and Latin thought, fresher minds look for a new restatement of religious truth. There are those who anticipate a new creation; we are at the end of one epoch and think we see the dawn of another. The widespread expectancy of the age is impressive. It is immensely real, but, as such, it is not necessarily 'religious.' Something is waiting to be brought to the birth, and irresistibly one is reminded of *Is.* xxxvii, 3 and lxvi, 9. Do we think of 'the world's unborn soul,'[9] or is it the God who knocks (*Rev.* iii, 20)? Is it a new stage in human evolution — as some imagine — or in Revelation? At all events, the creative process in the Universe is an overpowering objective reality, something to be shaped and canalized. It may be that the pangs of the present day, the vain attempts to revive an antiquated past or to strike out along new unspiritual paths, are but indications that the *right* way has not been found, the *right* type has not yet been created. What from a 'naturalistic' point of view is a real force striving in the Universe is, in religious terms, a Divine impatience or wrath; and it must surely be acknowledged that the ideologies and -isms we deplore and repudiate challenge us to give new life and spiritual strength and re-embodiment to our convictions.[10]

Christianity goes back to the days when history both interpreted and was reinterpreted by religion. If to us of to-day events of the far-off past seem too distant, too alien, or even historically too uncertain, the history now being made is forming the basis of a new religious realism. The comparative study of religions, the active widespread mental ferment, and the hard experiences of current events combine with the reshaping of the social substratum to form a common matrix, a 'universe of discourse,' which can unify men. Much religious truth that was discovered long ago is waiting to be rediscovered. The new stage is being prepared, and if we look for a new and better order both 'body' and 'spirit' are needed. Towards this we can even

[9] cf. Sir S. Radhakrishnan, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought* (1939), pp. 32 sqq.

[10] When we read the appeal to return to the old paths (*Jer.* vi, 16; *cf.* xviii, 15), it is necessary to remember that the Deutero-Isaiah with its fresh religious teaching — it is Israel's rediscovery of God — was followed by a reinterpretation of the past: the old reappears in a new form.

now contribute, and we shall see how the story of the birth of Christianity will gain a new freshness if and when there comes a rebirth of Christianity and we 're-Christianize'—if the verb be allowed — our half-Hebraic and half-Greek theology.

Whatever be the theology and philosophy of the future we have first to get down to bed-rock, to co-ordinate afresh our theology and our religious convictions. Do we *really* see a Divine purpose to-day—God's hand in history? Above all, if the quality of the 'body' and that of the 'spirit' are complementary, may we not by penetrating, courageous and reverent study prepare the 'temple' for that spiritual renewal which we shall call the 'Second Coming'?

# BOOK REVIEWS

## THE FAITH BY WHICH WE LIVE*

*Preface to Faith* is written by a Professor of Philosophy, who looks at Christianity as one who is outside the ranks of church leaders and theological writers. He considers some of the Gospel narratives, such as those of the Virgin birth and the physical resurrection, and discusses their veracity from the purely historical point of view. In his rather brief study of this subject he is of course dependent upon the researches of scholars. A fuller treatment would have disclosed other points which should be taken into consideration, such as the fact that the two stories of the Virgin birth, while independent, are not contradictory; that the Virgin birth is referred to in the Fourth Gospel by implication and applied to all believers, 'who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God'; that St. Paul, by a curious metaphor not quite understood, distinguishes his vision of Christ from the other post-resurrection appearances; and that St. Paul's doctrine of a spiritual resurrection body is congruent with the stories of Christ's body, which was palpable but able to pass through closed doors, but is not congruent with the modern theory that He was only seen in visions. Whether these additional facts would have altered Prof. Reid's judgment is doubtful, but they certainly ought to be borne in mind by his readers. It is unfortunately true, as he says, that many Christian writers have weakened their case by trying to find evidence for these narratives from dogmatic considerations, starting with the belief in

* L. A. Reid, D.Litt., *Preface to Faith* (Allen and Unwin. 1939. 6/-); D. R. Davies, *On to Orthodoxy* (Hodder and Stoughton. 1939. 6/-); Canon Vernon Storr, *Freedom and Tradition*, a study of Liberal Evangelicalism (Nisbet. 1940. 6/-); Leslie Simmonds, *The Framework of Faith* (Longmans. 1939. 8/6); Canon F. A. Cockin, *The Holy Spirit and the Church* (S.C.M. 1939. 2/6).

the divinity of our Lord. The most valuable part of the book is the consideration of our Lord's nature and the traditional statement that He was both God and man. While abandoning, as one must, the Chalcedonian definition, Prof. Reid offers constructive thoughts which will certainly help towards a future understanding of the unique person of Christ. In the narrow sense of the word the author is thoroughly unorthodox, but the time has come when an orthodoxy which is bound up with outworn philosophies becomes a danger to living Christianity. The spirit in which the book is written is truly Christian, showing a devotion to the truth (using the word 'devotion' in its religious sense), a humility as to the finality of one's own opinions, and charity towards all men — except blind guides, with whom even Christ had no patience. In *On to Orthodoxy* we have the life experience of a man who after many adventures of the soul finds peace at last. His early life of poverty resulted naturally in his acceptance of Socialism, and with it the nineteenth century doctrine of the inevitable progress of mankind. Somehow these ideas got mixed up with Christian Liberalism; and when the war of 1914 shattered his Humanistic optimism, his Christian Liberalism went down too. From then onwards he went through many phases — Pacifism, Marxism, Aestheticism, Atheism — resulting from deep and bitter experiences of the soul, a soul touched to the quick by the horrors of a world undone. What he became at last, he became 'as the result, not only of thinking, but of suffering.' His final haven of rest is Christianity. It would have been better if he had used the word 'Christianity' instead of 'orthodoxy' in the title of the book, and elsewhere; for his interest is in practical Christianity, and his incursions into theology are slight and somewhat amateurish. The great boon which he has found, and which mankind needs, is forgiveness of sins through the cross and resurrection. On that point, no doubt, all Christians would agree, and it is not clear why Liberal Christianity and Modernism should be treated as if they too did not preach the gospel of redemption. In any case, it is not quite certain what he means by Liberal Christianity, especially as he disclaims being a Fundamentalist. If one wants to know what Liberal Christianity really is, there is an excellent account in Canon Storr's book, *Freedom and Tradition.* With conspicuous fairness and breadth of view he traces briefly the history of the various movements in the Church of England from the eighteenth century onwards which in one way or another have formed the background of the modern school which is called the Anglican Evangelical Group Movement. What makes this historical presentation particularly attractive is that, instead of merely speaking of the various Movements, the author selects certain outstanding leaders in each case and quotes their actual words. This method has the advantage of showing that each of the great Movements was not only setting the Church in motion, but was itself in a state of movement within, a fact which should prevent anyone from hasty generalisations

of condemnation. A critic may not approve of the final direction of those who call themselves by the name of one of the great Movements, but that disapproval does not mean that progress in useful directions may not have been achieved by earlier workers in the same Movement. *The Framework of the Faith* is the first of a series entitled 'The Teaching of the Church.' The question that immediately comes to the mind of the reviewer is what sort of reader it is intended for. Obviously teaching must have in mind the persons to be taught, their present background of knowledge, and their capabilities of thought. Roughly speaking, this book goes as far, in its critical treatment of the Bible and of Christian theology, as the reviewer finds possible in his preaching to a village congregation and his teaching to the children in an elementary Church school. As guidance to a preacher or teacher in simple ways of expressing that amount of truth, the book may serve a useful purpose; but any member of a congregation who is sufficiently well educated to read a book of this size ought to be able to dive deeper into the modern understanding of Christianity. As examples of statements which can scarcely be allowed to pass by intelligent Christians are these: 'The doctrine of the Holy Trinity . . . is the primary and foundation doctrine of the Christian Church, for upon it all its other teaching depends'; 'The Christian religion asserts that in Christ the place which, in other individuals, would be occupied by a created human personality is taken by the uncreated and eternal Person of the Word of God, the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity.' The general impression given by the book is far too much that the Church has 'definite teaching' on every subject from the historicity of the Bible to the doctrine of God, and too little that the coming of Christ and the Holy Spirit has set in motion a movement for the gradual unfolding of the truth, and that each generation is responsible, not merely for handing on knowledge once received, but for perceiving, with greater clearness than before, the significance of Christ and the dealings of God with man.

*The Holy Spirit and the Church* is one of the Diocesan Series, which the Student Christian Movement began to publish four years ago. They are addressed in particular to the English laity. The subject of this volume is difficult for two reasons—the general lack of interest in the Holy Spirit, and the weakness of our theology of the Holy Spirit. The two difficulties are no doubt connected: Christian leaders are, and always have been, aware of the importance of the work of the Holy Spirit, but they have been unable to do more than touch on the relationship of the Spirit with the other 'persons' of the Trinity; and the Christian laity, though vaguely aware of the Holy Spirit, have not felt there is anything concrete that they can grasp. Canon Cockin has made an excellent and very readable attempt to meet the difficulties by an account, as far as it can be expressed in simple language, of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and by showing the vital part played by Him in the life of the Christian community.

L. E. Browne.

## HOLY IMAGES*

Modern congregations are apt to listen to the denunciations of idolatry which occur frequently in the Old Testament and not infrequently in the New with either a complete lack of interest or a complacent feeling that there is at least one sin which they have outgrown.

> 'The heathen in his blindness
> Bows down to wood and stone,'

but they have left behind such primitive foolishness. Sermons are sometimes preached on this topic (the second and longest of the Anglican Homilies is against the peril of idolatry), but they seem neither to possess relevance nor to convey information, and their real point may be found in a missionary or anti-Roman bias. Hitherto it has not been easy to get a full treatment of the topic in English, but those interested will find most of the facts accessible in Dr. Bevan's recent book. The Preface states the scope of the work:

> 'The four lectures which appear, expanded with a good deal of additional matter, in this book were delivered in Edinburgh, on Lord Gifford's Foundation, in 1933. They were not included in the volume which contained the other sixteen lectures (*Symbolism and Belief*), since they constituted a digression on a particular instance of symbolism — the use of carved and painted images in religion — and might be left out without the general argument of that book being affected. It thus seemed to me advisable to make of them a smaller separate volume. They do not deal with such fundamental questions in the philosophy of religious belief as were raised in the larger book, yet a study of image-worship in the ancient world, and, later on, in the Christian Church, does offer many points of peculiar interest — more perhaps that is curious and surprising than anyone unacquainted with the subject might suppose. Nor are the questions which it raises all of merely academic interest; some are still controversial questions of vital consequence, both in the Christian Church at home and in the present-day contact between Christian missions and the traditional idolatry of some non-Christian peoples.'

Dr. Bevan opens with a discussion of the relation of aniconic worship to idolatry, and proceeds to the attack on idolatry in the Old Testament, which took two forms, either that it is absurd to venerate dumb idols or that it is unlawful to represent the true God by means of images or to use images as accessories of his cult. After a sketch of the fully-developed idolatry of Egypt, Greece and India it is noticed that the Hebrew prophetic religion did not shrink from the notion of a supernatural virtue inhering in a material object, when there was no similitude, as for instance the Ark or Elisha's staff. Similarly Moslems worship the Kaaba at Mecca. The second lecture treats at length the Second Commandment and its inter-

* *Holy Images, an Inquiry into Idolatry and Image-Worship in Ancient Paganism and in Christianity.* By Edwyn Bevan. (Allen and Unwin. 1940. 7/6.)

pretation and observance. A good deal of archaeological evidence is collected to show that — especially outside Palestine — the Jews did not shrink from representational art. On the other hand the Rabbi Nahum ben Simai (c. 260 A.D.) achieved the surname of All-holiest through being reputed never to have looked on a heathen coin. The rest of the lecture summarises Greek discussion of religious art and concludes with a notice of Moslem theory and practice. In his last two lectures Dr. Bevan records the changing views of idolatry held in the Christian Church, but unfortunately stops short at the Reformation, which was marked or marred by the destruction of so much religious art. The story is one of the gradual supersession of the Jewish view by the Greek, culminating in the iconoclastic controversy. Dr. Bevan well points out that there are not merely two simple antithetic views on the point.

> 'There are, of course, in regard to the use of pictures and images in worship, not two, but three, distinguishable views to consider. There is the view that all making of pictures and images, or at any rate all representations of persons religiously sacred, is wrong — the view of Jews and Moslems: there is secondly the view that the pictures and images of sacred persons — with, it may be, some exceptions — are permissible in order to instruct simple minds in the sacred story, or make the story vivid to the imagination and so stimulate devotion, but that it is wrong to offer any forms of homage to pictures or images; and thirdly, there is the view that it is right, not only to make pictures and images, but to address towards them signs of religious reverence — kissing, bowing or prostration.'

By its acceptance of the Second Council of Nicaea as Oecumenical the Western Church, which had followed the moderate course indicated by the Council of Elvira and Pope Gregory I, was involved in the Greek doctrine of images best represented by S. John of Damascus, though in practice the Western Church has been less inclined to superstitious views of wonder-working images. Nevertheless the Western Church has been preserved from extreme views by holding that the Second Commandment is still binding on Christians, though S. John of Damascus treated it as obsolete. On the other hand, in the West it has been held lawful to delineate God the Father, but the East has shrunk from this step.

We may conclude with a lucid explanation of the difference between the Catholic and the Protestant views on the use of religious art.

> 'The custom of venerating images has meant much more than this. It has meant the Catholic belief that saints in the unseen world could take knowledge of the desires of the living for their intercessions. The honours shown to the images, putting lighted candles before them, and so on, have expressed such desires directed to spirits who have passed into the Divine Presence. Here is a difference between Catholic and Protestant which matters. When, therefore, the controversy is represented as being concerned simply with the question whether it is right or wrong to address external homage of any kind

to statues and pictures, it is misrepresented. There are some works of veneration, as we have just seen, regarding which it is a matter of little moment whether they are addressed to the images of great men dead or not — a mere matter of custom or personal inclination. What really matters in the controversy is whether the Catholic belief about the continued fellowship between saints in the unseen world and those now on earth is true or not. It is only such marks of veneration as imply this belief which the Protestant is bound, on his presuppositions, to condemn. To act on that belief, even if a man addressed his cry for help to the saint in heaven without any image or picture or visible emblem at all, would, from the Protestant standpoint, be just as wrong as if his petition were accompanied by an external gesture directed to an image of the saint; whereas, on the other hand, if the Catholic belief is true, it matters little whether the saint is invoked with the eyes directed to a visible image or only by an inner movement. The question of the veneration of images is thus, by itself, a trivial one; the question of the invocation of saints is the important question behind the controversy, between Protestants on the one side and Roman Catholics and Orthodox on the other side, just as the question whether a divine virtue resides in the image or not is the important question on which Protestants and Roman Catholics agree against the Orthodox.'

P. R. Smythe.

## A METHOD OF PRAYER*

In *Prayer of Citizenship* we are offered a method of prayer which escapes the too common ways of being asked to pray for what we ought to want rather than making our real wants known to God. Here we are encouraged to put our hand into God's hand and exchange confidences; for in some very helpful suggestions as to the way of prayer there is emphasis laid on 'the prayer that listens' as well as on 'the prayer of constructive imagination.'

There is beauty here, for the author recognizes the spiritual need of music in verbal expression and we are led to converse with God as intelligent as well as confiding children, and in contrast with too many manuals of prayer there is here nothing forced or formal, but such communion as may express the sigh of the simplest heart and need outrage no deepest conviction of an illuminated mind.

It is Reality that we discover all through, and with gratitude we find ourselves tempted to turn back to a treasure of earlier days, the beloved Streeter's book *Reality,* where we read:

> 'Let prayer and meditation centre always round the thought of the Love and Power of that infinite and all-pervading spirit of whom Christ is the portrait, and it will be possible to rise above the natural consequences of evil happenings, to make of suffering an opportunity, of loss a stepping-stone to gain, and to find in failure retrieved and pain conquered the secret of power.'

* *Prayers of Citizenship.* By Kenneth Henderson, M.A. (Longmans. 3/6. 1940.)

How often have we failed to find such Reality in our prayers, and how gratefully we must welcome the little volume before us which can give us the kindliest of help in being our true selves as we utter 'the soul's sincere desire' and find ourselves again and again impelled to reach after desirable things that our hearts have hardly formulated! We seem to find here, indeed, the realization of a great truth exquisitely expressed for us long ago by another valued teacher (Lily Dougall):

> 'Religion needs to employ the language of reason, as precise and as full as it can be made, the language of art, which carries into different regions of the depth and height, and the language of action, which is like a hand pointing to the distance where clear vision fails, like a hand held behind the ear in the consciousness of a music whose vibrations are barely audible.'

That language is here! And it may tempt readers to search for many more refreshing buds of thought and desire if we may put together a little posy of fragrant, and sometimes pungent and aromatic flowers of devotional aspiration, such as:

> Rise up, O Lord, in the path of our cares, that we may no longer be fevered by littleness and stupified by the commonplace.
>
> That life's morning may be made glorious by the splendour and discipline of Christ's service.
>
> That we may so pass through things temporal that we may enlarge our possession of things eternal.
>
> That God's creative wisdom may think through our minds.
>
> Remind us continually that Thou art our Father.
>
> Grant that as we reach out to the weight and burden of each new responsibility we may be sustained by the mortal consciousness of immortal gladness.
>
> That we may discover that He has been with us unseen.
>
> That we may be given steadiness of soul in all times of common danger.
>
> That we may worship in the forgetfulness of self.
>
> Quicken in us the zest to serve new possibilities of good.
>
> That our companions may be persuaded how joyful, lovely and serviceable is the life that is staged upon Thee.

And how well has the author expressed the purpose of his book in the Preface which is full of wise instruction, when he tells us the meditations 'aim at helping to create an active and distinctive Christian sanity in the midst of a time of mental strain and emotional disturbance'!

The need of such help is very plain: this little book should help many of us to find brave encouragement 'above the battle.' It is not only a book of prayers but of spiritual reinforcement for those who use it. It really does teach us *how* to pray.

HENRY J. TRUEMAN.

## THE SHELDON BIBLE READERS*

The publishers say, 'In this series a return is made to the old Bible Reader. Modern critical knowledge, however, is unobtrusively used in the choice of passages and sometimes in the translation. The Revised Version is printed for the most part, but modern equivalents for difficult words are, where necessary, substituted or added.' The readers are intended, and admirably suited, for boys and girls of 10 to 14, and should be used consecutively if possible.

The first part begins with a note on the truth of the Old Testament. This is the right start; the first question that a boy (or perhaps girl, too) asks when he comes in contact with these stories is, Is it true? He is then disappointed because he cannot be given a definite yes or no for an answer. This note puts the situation as clearly and simply as it could be put.

The text of the Bible is printed (as also in later parts) without chapter or verse references, in continuous paragraphs; the necessary references are given at the head of each section. The sections have each a few lines of introductory note, and occasionally a note is bracketed into the text. The part contains both Creation stories, the Fall story, Cain and Abel, the Birth of Seth, the Flood, and the Tower of Babel.

Part II has on its cover the ram caught in a thicket found by Sir Leonard Woolley at Ur, and some other well chosen illustrations. Part III has a few discrete references to J, E, P, and D. Part IV has Ramses II on the cover, with some hieroglyphs calculated to secure the attention of the code expert. This part contains the plagues and the Decalogue; also one rather serious blunder; in the heading of p. 6 for '*Genesis*' read '*Exodus*.'

Part V contains the account of Joshua's charge from *Joshua* i; the crossing of Jordan, the fall of Jericho, and ch. 23 of the same book, From *Judges* come the stories of Othniel, Gideon, Deborah and Barak, with the birth and death of Samson (no more than this). To it is added the birth and call of Samuel from I *Samuel*. Part VI begins with an excellent note on the Jewish attitude to history. The Witch of Endor story is included in the extracts, which are from I and II *Samuel* and II *Kings*, and no attempt is made to whitewash the character of David.

Part VII begins with the division of the kingdom. The kings themselves are kept well in the background, and sufficient prominence is given to the prophets. The Elijah stories are given in detail, and some of those about Elisha. There are good selections from *Amos*, properly set out in verse, and three small pieces of *Hosea*. Part VIII contains a little, but

* Second Series, Old Testament. Part I, Early Hebrew Stories. Part II, Abraham and Isaac. Part III, Jacob and Joseph. Part IV, Moses and Exodus. Part V, Joshua and Judges. Part VI, Saul, David, and Solomon. Part VII, The Northern Kingdom. Part VIII, The Southern Kingdom. Part IX, Return from Exile. Part X, Hebrew Poetry. Part XI, Hebrew Wisdom. Part XII, The Greek Period. Paper covers; various prices, 3*d*. to 6*d*.

enough, history pure and simple; then the call of Isaiah (ch. 6), followed by ch. 1 and a few extracts. There follows more of II *Kings* and of *Isaiah*, with *Micah* vi, 6-8; the Deuteronomic reformation, the Shema and other parts of *Deuteronomy*, ending with extracts from *Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Nahum,* and *Jeremiah*.

Part IX begins with a few verses from *Lamentations*, to illustrate the spirit in which holy men met adversity. A few verses of *Obadiah* follow, with *Psalm* 127, a little *Ezekiel,* and some ten pages of Deutero-Isaiah; then some portions of *Haggai, Zechariah,* and *Ezra*; then a little Trito-Isaiah (some would take exception to the heading of *Isaiah* lxi, 1-2, 'The Prophet proclaims the Gospel' without further explanation); some *Malachi* and *Nehemiah*, with archaeological references to the Jews in Egypt. Most of *Ruth* and *Jonah* are here, with the *Leviticus* references for the Day of Atonement, and David's prayer in I *Chronicles* xxix.

Part X contains a good selection from the *Psalms* and *Job,* sensible extracts from the *Song of Songs,* and a note on Hebrew metre. Part XI contains extracts from *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiasticus,* and *Wisdom*. Part XII begins with a note on the history of the Persian Empire. It contains passages from *Joel,* and later parts of *Zechariah*, I and II *Maccabees,* the stories of *Daniel, Tobit* and those in I and II *Esdras*. These last three parts can be particularly recommended to anyone who wants something interesting and off the beaten track of Old Testament study in school.

W. H. Oldaker.

## THE METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL OF NONCONFORMITY*

Parochial histories are not uncommon, but a history of a dissenting chapel is unusual because both the building and the congregation are mostly of recent date. The present volume, written by the honorary treasurer of the City Temple, is an account rather of a congregation than of a building. The continuity is not indeed broken, but somewhat tenuous, since not only has the site been several times changed, but there have been secessions of malcontents. The book takes the form of biographies of the various ministers from Thomas Goodwin (a friend of Oliver Cromwell and later President of Magdalen College, Oxford) to Leslie Weatherhead. Of the earlier ministers not much is known, and it is not till the time of Dr. Parker that the narrative becomes at all full.

The City Temple has been vividly, if inaccurately, entitled the cathedral of Nonconformity, and its position has been different from that of the ordinary dissenting chapel. It is the only Nonconformist place of worship within the City of London, and so shares in the problem of the redundant

* *The City Temple 1640—1940.* The Tercentenary Commemoration Volume. By Albert Clare. (Independent Press. 1940. 5/-.)

city churches, which have been left derelict by the migration of the population to the suburbs. The City Temple, like the city church, cannot rely on a resident and adjacent congregation, but must gather an eclectic congregation from all parts of London, and in the case of a Nonconformist chapel this congregation must be attracted by a star preacher, who has little opportuntity of getting to know what is largely a floating audience. The city churches continue to exist, in spite of their minute congregations, because of their endowments, but the City Temple lacks endowments and has large maintenance expenses. The post of minister there must be in many ways unenviable. We are told that Dr. Norwood's ministry terminated because declining revenue threatened bankruptcy, and the close of Dr. Fort's ministry ended likewise because of financial failure. The minister of the City Temple must be able to attract a large audience without the help that the normal minister or parish priest has of knowing his people. The title, 'the cathedral of Nonconformity,' has at least this much justification that the congregation is of the cathedral type, transitory and unshepherded. But whereas the cathedral goes on whether worshippers attend or not, the City Temple must offer some special attraction that will make people take a Sunday journey from the suburbs.

To those who attend the City Temple, this book will be of interest largely as an account of distinguished Nonconformist preachers, and may to some extent supplement Mr. Smyth's recent *The Art of Preaching,* which is purely Anglican in appeal. The preacher's, like the actor's, art dies with him, and the most exact description may not reproduce his effect. The theatrical and fundamentalist personality of Dr. Parker may not interest the present generation, but the description which Mr. Clare quotes from Mr. Angus Watson's *Life* may be worth giving:

> 'To those who never heard him preach the power of his oratory is almost beyond description. To see him in the City Temple pulpit was an experience never to be forgotten. His massive figure and his leonine head at once fixed the attention, and his voice, rich as an organ, held his audience spellbound. It rose and fell in sonorous periods, as he poured out his perfectly-phrased sentences. He was a superb actor, and he delivered his thoughts with a dramatic force that kindled each sentence. His sermons were an example of perfect English; every word the inevitable one for its purpose, each thought challenging and full of surprise — the whole constructed like a stately building, graceful in model and design. The gleaming eyes, the vigorous gesture, the constantly changing inflection of his voice, now soft as a whisper, then challenging as a trumpet; the whole effect was so memorable as to be almost overwhelming. No one had ever spoken like him; he created a new tradition, and established a vogue which others vainly strove to copy. It was no surprise that thousands who usually never entered a church crowded to hear him, and that among his audiences were to be found outstanding statesmen and public men of his time. Visitors from all over the world were to be found in his audiences, and what he had to say in his sermons was quoted freely in the press next day as a prominent item of news.'

The closing sentences remind us of the once great political influence of the Nonconformist conscience.

Dr. Parker's successor, Mr. R. J. Campbell, had a different outlook, and did much to popularise liberal theology. His ministry, like that of another Congregationalist, Dr. Orchard, at the King's Weigh House, marked the decline of traditional Nonconformity. Mr. Campbell was never a typical Nonconformist; for one thing he had been educated at Oxford, where Nonconformity seems to wither. He had dabbled in Anglo-Catholicism, and though he did not indulge in the ceremonial aberrations affected by Dr. Orchard, the City Temple failed to satisfy the aesthetic side of his nature. Dr. Prestige in his *Life of Bishop Gore* (p. 375) describes his reconciliation to the Anglican Church:

> 'In the course of 1915 he had the happiness of reconciling the famous Free Church preacher, the Rev. R. J. Campbell, to the Church. Campbell had known him first in Oxford at Pusey House. The last day before his Free Church ordination was spent with Gore at Little Cloisters. Gore made no attempt to dissuade him from the course that he was taking, but prophesied that in the end he would probably return to the Church. While Gore was at Birmingham he had felt obliged to attack Campbell's Liberal theology. Now Campbell was leaving the City Temple, and when Gore heard the news he asked for old association's sake to receive Campbell into the Anglican communion himself at Cuddesdon. An intimacy was thus renewed which lasted without further break. Rashdall at New College heard the announcement, that Campbell had been received by Gore, with sardonic disapprobation. "I wonder," he said, "how much they made him swallow."'

Dr. Campbell's Anglican career has been dull and orthodox.

The next minister was the American, Dr. Fort Newton, who continued Dr. Campbell's Liberal tradition, but his three years' tenure appears to have been unhappy and is very briefly related by Mr. Clare. During his time Miss Maude Royden, though a woman and an Anglican, served as his assistant. More recently Miss Dorothy Wilson has also acted as assistant pastor.

The next significant pastorate was that of Dr. F. W. Norwood, who arrived in England as a chaplain of the Australian forces and who remained on at the City Temple at the conclusion of the Great War until 1936. He was succeeded by the Rev. L. Weatherhead, a Methodist minister who attracted large audiences and has developed greatly the pastoral side of his ministry. He has devoted himself to the care of individuals and has adapted modern psychiatric methods to the cure of sick souls. The Roman Catholic Church, and to some extent the Anglican, have regarded this work as a large part of pastoral duty, but except for visits to the sick and dying, Nonconformist ministers have not cultivated this individual ministry. Mr. Weatherhead is also an extensive writer and has a wide audience outside through his frequent broadcasts. To the present volume he contributes an introduction, which is a defence of popular preaching. Like other popular

preachers he has had to suffer from the criticism of unpopular preachers, whose attacks are largely a form of self-defence. In this country the intellectual receives so little encouragement that it would be hard to rob him of his sense of superiority.

The future of organised religion is dubious and obscure, and Nonconformity may be regarded as a spent force. If there is a lesson for Anglicans in the history of the City Temple it would appear to be the value of endowments in tiding a church over an adverse period and in the independence which they guarantee to the incumbent.

P. R. SMYTHE.

## OUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD*

It has been said that in the last two decades the centre of theological disputation has shifted from consideration of the Incarnation to that of Redemption and man's knowledge of God. In less than three hundred pages, with solidity and compactness, Dr. Baillie surveys the answers of the last twenty years to the question, ' How do we know God? ' finding also that he must touch on the relevant question, ' How do we know anything? ' He himself contends (1) that every man is consciously or unconsciously confronted by the presence of God, and (2) that man's reasoning processes never convince him of the reality of the God with whom he is confronted, but performing their appropriate function harmonise the fact of that confrontation with the framework of common human experience.

Armed with these contentions, Dr. Baillie parts company with St. Thomas and the whole host of intellectual theologians who have followed him. The proof of argument never leads to a belief which did not already exist.

> ' In the theological classroom it is, I believe, never a genuinely open question whether God exists or even (to mention one other example) whether He is One; the open question is only as to the nature and grounds of our already existing belief in His Being and His unity ' (p. 139).

Dr. Baillie in fact is only using in the field of theological criticism the dictum of Dr. Illingworth:

> ' The Christian religion refuses to be proved first and practised afterwards. Its practice and its proof go hand in hand.'

On the other hand, he also parts company with the Barthian contention that a knowledge of God exists only in the heart of the regenerate believer and cannot be subjected to argument. If Barth rightly asserts that acceptance of the Christian revelation is an act of divine omnipotence, then where comes man's power to accept or refuse and how can it be asserted man is made in the image of God?

* *Our Knowledge of God.* By John Baillie, D.Litt., D.D. (Oxford University Press. 8/6. 1939.)

> 'If it be true that man was first created in the image of God, the total obliteration of that image could mean only the total obliteration of His humanity' (p. 27).

The preaching of the truths of revelation becomes akin to the commands of dictators.

> 'A religion that refuses to exhibit its own reasonableness is fellow to a political régime that refuses to submit to a free referendum, and it is no accident that the two are products of the same age' (p. 16).

Once it is conceded that belief is prior to argument, it is easy to show that it is possible to believe in the heart and disbelieve with the top of the mind, and conversely to believe with the top of the mind and disbelieve in the heart. Atheism is caused by an unconscious desire to disbelieve, while unbelief in the heart is often in reality the inadequacy of a faith which is not conscious of itself or a blindness of heart which does not see the dishonesty of its outward professions. These corollaries which Dr. Baillie draws out from his contentions can be most fruitfully compared with the late Dr. Schiller's analysis of belief into implicit belief, debatable beliefs, half-beliefs and dishonest beliefs in his little book *Problems of Belief*.

It is, however, Dr. Baillie's contention that every man is consciously or unconsciously confronted by the presence of God which is most open to dispute. It is easy enough to quote personal experience, but that does not prove it to be universal; it is dangerous to make any assumption from the unconscious and use it as a bag from which to extract experiences for which there is no plain evidence. It might be argued that there is evidence that the man who is not conscious of God lacks peace of mind, but what is to be said of the millions of young men and women in Europe to-day of whom there is no shred of evidence that they have ever been confronted by the presence of God? Dr. Baillie uses solipsism as an analogy, but the solipsist in theory cannot be a solipsist in practice because life on any plane forbids it: an atheist may be an atheist in practice because existence on the sub-human level permits it. It would be difficult to contend that there is a universal response to beauty in its many forms; many are tone deaf or colour blind. A universal sensitiveness to the presence of God is equally difficult to discover. At one end of the scale there appear to be the mystics, the prophets, and the saints; at the other end men so brutish that they can hardly be called men. Between them lie the great majority whose faith wavers between a perverted blindness of heart and an ever-quickening response. The business of reason is to show that that faith is necessary to the full life of man and is proved so by its fruits.

Dr. Baillie's book will prove a sane and concise guide to the student of theological controversy in the last twenty years. Where argument is so close and reference so frequent it is only to be regretted that each chapter is not preceded by a synopsis, as was the custom of Dr. Streeter.

F. C. Snape.

## FORBES ROBINSON*

Three clerical brothers, Armitage, Charles and Forbes, bearing the surname of Robinson, exercised a beneficent influence on the life of the English Church in the generation before the Great War. Armitage, in the true succession to Lightfoot, Westcott and Hort, became Dean of Westminster and then of Wells. Charles, Canon of Ripon, became a notable exponent of the claims of Christian Foreign Missions. Forbes, Fellow and Tutor of Christ's College, Cambridge, died young in 1904. Although known to but a narrow circle, compared with the larger public of his brothers, the religious influence of Forbes was very real among his pupils and intimates. After his death a volume of letters compiled by his brother Charles was privately circulated. By 1909 this volume had gone through seven impressions. In 1905 his *College and Ordination Addresses* were published. Although to some these volumes will seem in their contents to be slight and occasional, reflecting the limitations of the outlook and knowledge and sentiment of their period and locality, they possess a more profound quality as the expression of the experiences and convictions of a soul sincerely Christian. Not only are they worth reading, especially by candidates for ordination, but by many a young man and young woman entering on a University career.

That the volume of *Letters to his Friends* possesses more than a transitory influence is evidenced by its being re-published by the Student Christian Movement in 1938, who state that

> 'Over 30,000 copies of it have been sold. . . . It is the record of a life of singular beauty and one of the most impressive devotional volumes in the English language.'

The four convictions which he left with his friends were :

(1) The value to a man of his own personality—the immense possibilities of life and the immense importance of realizing them both in thought and action.

(2) The meaning of love—not sentimentally diffused but concentrated in the whole-hearted endeavour to secure the essential welfare of his neighbour, the love of man inspired and directed by the supreme love of God.

(3) The power of Prayer.

> 'He prayed for those he loved, it is certain, for hours at a time. All his thoughts about some men gradually became prayers. He could not teach us everything that prayer meant to him : he could not teach us to pray as he prayed. Yet through him one or two at least of his undergraduate friends saw a little further into the eternal mystery of prayer. . . . He believed—he knew (this was his testimony)—that he could in this way bring to bear upon a man's life more real effective influence than by any word of direct personal teaching or advice. So did he prove once more that the man of power in the spiritual world is the man of prayer' (p. 51).

(4) Beauty as Divine and Eternal, a true path of ascent to God : a lesson often learnt too late in the religious life.

> 'Too late have I sought thee, thou Beauty, so ancient and so new, too late have I sought thee' (St. Augustine).

H.D.A.M.

* *College and Ordination Addresses.* By Forbes Robinson. (Longmans. 3/6. 1905.)
*Letters to his Friends.* By Forbes Robinson. (Published privately 1904.)
*Letters to his Friends.* By Forbes Robinson. (S.C.M. 4/6. 1938.)

# CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of *The Modern Churchman*

## THE NEW ECUMENICAL CREED.

SIR,

I am glad that attention has been drawn in *The Modern Churchman* and elsewhere to the dogmatic crudity which at present guards the entrance to the World Council of Christian Churches. Your readers may be interested to know that over eighteen months ago the Committee on Faith and Order of the Methodist Church passed a resolution—which I moved—asking that this statement should receive early reconsideration.

I am glad to find from your remarks in 'Signs of the Times' that Archbishop Temple assents to its 'obviously crude' nature as a theological formulation. I have never ceased to wonder where the theologians of the Church were when this statement was approved.

C. J. WRIGHT.

Didsbury College, Manchester.

## SIR FRANCIS FREMANTLE'S QUESTION.

SIR,

I look forward to your answer to Sir Francis Fremantle's letter in the June *Modern Churchman,* for it is a very vital and seriously insidious question he has raised as to the actual death of Christ on the Cross: for of course it was absolutely necessary for it to be a real physical death, otherwise Death would have defeated His whole work and career — it was the crowning touch and victory of His great work. All that was left to Him at the last moment of His earthly life was His 'Spirit' which had conquered. Whatever we may believe as to the Resurrection being on some physical or entirely spiritual lines seem unimportant to the most important fact of Christianity, that its Founder died a physical death on the Roman cross. I know you agree with me, but the suggestion made is to my mind a real heresy, and does make all the difference to the essence of Christian doctrine.

Basset Garth, Penn.

KATHLEEN PRYNNE.

[We regret not being able to publish other letters dealing with this theme. —ED., *M.C.*]

## A DAILY PRAYER FOR WAR-TIME.

SIR,

Our Archbishops have urged us to pray daily for the Divine Blessing on our nation and our cause in this time of war. The following prayer some may find helpful for that purpose.

O Heavenly Father, we supplicate Thy Blessing, Protection and Guidance for our nation in this time of war. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst grant to our rulers and to all who serve under them by land, by sea, by air, a firm and humble faith in Thee and in Thy Righteous Will. We beseech Thee also that Thou wouldst grant to them the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Strength, the Spirit of Fortitude and Fearlessness, the Spirit of Initiative and Energy, the Spirit of Justice and Mercy, and that Thou wouldst give to all Thy people the Spirit of Steadfastness and the Grace of Final Perseverance, that in accordance with Thy Will a just and enduring Peace may be secured for the nations of the world and Thy Kingdom advanced upon earth, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

ORANS.